

REMARKS

Claims 1-13 are pending. By this Amendment, claims 1, 4 and 8 are amended and claims 11-13 are added.

Support for the amendment to claims 1, 4 and 8 can be found in the specification at paragraph [0062] - [0067].

Entry of the amendments is proper under 37 CFR §1.116 since the amendments: (a) place the application in condition for allowance (for the reasons discussed herein); (b) do not raise any new issue requiring further search and/or consideration (since the amendments amplify issues previously discussed throughout prosecution); (c) satisfy a requirement of form asserted in the previous Office Action; (d) do not present any additional claims without canceling a corresponding number of finally rejected claims; and (e) place the application in better form for appeal, should an appeal be necessary. The amendments are necessary and were not earlier presented because they are made in response to arguments raised in the final rejection. Entry of the amendments is thus respectfully requested.

I. The Claims Define Patentable Subject Matter

The Office Action rejects claims 1-10 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) over U.S.P. 5,768,119 to Havekost et al. This Rejection is respectfully traversed.

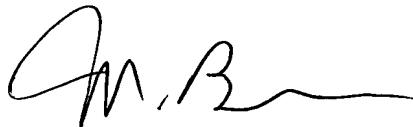
Havekost does not disclose determining whether at least one part of the attribute information is completed to be acquired, as in the invention of amended independent claims 1, 4 and 8. In the invention of amended independent claims 1, 4 and 8, when the selection has not been completed, the selection section determines whether or not all the attributes can be acquired. (See e.g., paragraph [0064].) Havekost is devoid of such a feature.

II. Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of claims 1-13 are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



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Date: April 16, 2004

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